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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/722,671	11/26/2003	Tsuyoshi Mase	PP03-163US	7738
1218	7590	07/13/2004	EXAMINER	
CASELLA & HESPOS 274 MADISON AVENUE NEW YORK, NY 10016				LE, THANH TAM T
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			2839	

DATE MAILED: 07/13/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/722,671	MASE ET AL. <i>(initials)</i>	
Examiner	Art Unit		
Thanh-Tam T. Le	2839		

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 26 November 2003.
- 2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.
- 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 1-17 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) Claim(s) 1-17 is/are rejected.
- 7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) The drawing(s) filed on 26 November 2003 is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner. Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a). Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 - a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 11/26/03.
- 4) Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
- 5) Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

1. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

2. Claims 1-4 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Betsui (5,037,336).

Betsui, figures 1 and 4E, discloses a connector comprising:

- a housing (10) having a terminal accommodating portion with opposite front and rear end and having cavities (11) extending between the ends for receiving terminal fittings along a connecting direction, a receptacle (13) surrounding the front end of the terminal accommodating portion;
- a separate front member (51) insertable along an inserting direction into the receptacle and towards the front end of the terminal accommodating portion; and
- guiding means (19, 63, 69 and 23) between the front member and the receptacle for guiding the front member into the receptacle substantially parallel with the connecting direction.

Regarding claim 2, the separate front member is configured to form at least part of front ends of the cavities.

Regarding claim 3, the guiding means comprising at least one rib (69) and at least

one groove (23) formed on opposed facing surface of the front member and the receptacle and slidably engageable with each other.

Regarding claim 4, Betsui, figure 1, discloses the guiding means comprising a plurality of pairs of ribs (63 and 69) and grooves (19 and 23). The ribs and the grooves in each pair having cross sections different from the ribs and the grooves in the other of the pairs.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

3. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

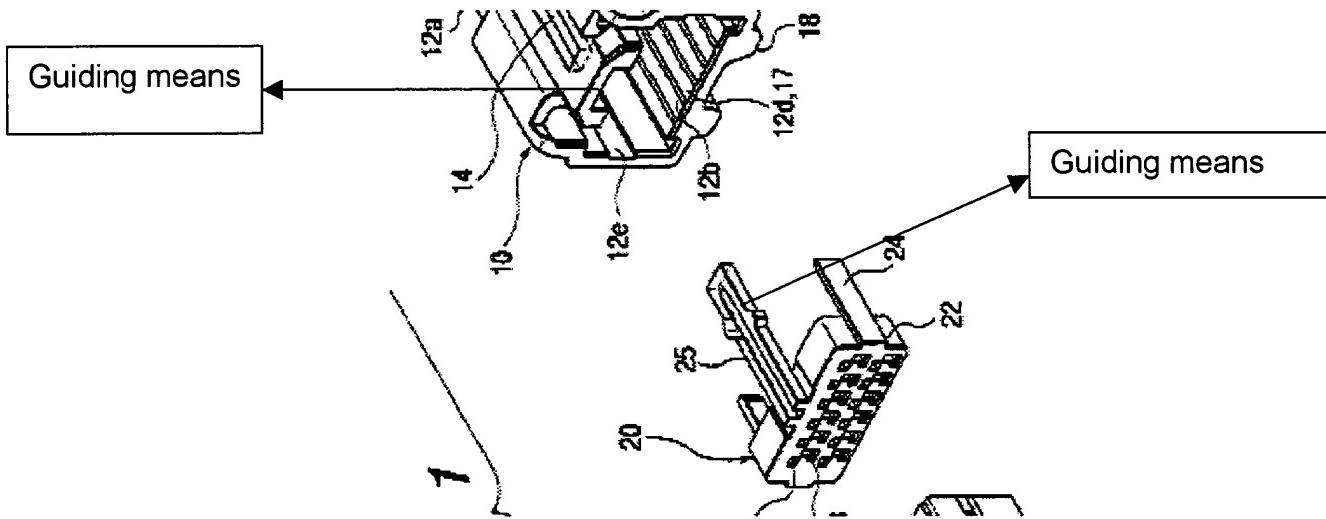
(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

4. Claims 1 and 5-17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Suzuki (6,652,328) in view of Iwahori (6,048,226).

Suzuki, figure 1, discloses a connector comprising:

- a housing (10) having a terminal accommodating portion with opposite front and rear end, a receptacle surrounding the front end of the terminal accommodating portion;
- a separate front member (20) insertable along an inserting direction into the receptacle and towards the front end of the terminal accommodating portion; and

- guiding means (see a figure below) between the front member and the receptacle for guiding the front member into the receptacle substantially parallel with the connecting direction.



Suzuki discloses the instant claimed invention as described above except for the housing having cavities extending between the front and rear ends of the housing for receiving terminal fittings.

Iwahori, figure 1, discloses a connector (35) having terminal receiving chambers (45) for receiving male terminals (33) are formed in a housing (37). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Suzuki's connector housing to have the connector housing with terminal receiving chambers as taught by Iwahori, in order to align the terminals within the housing.

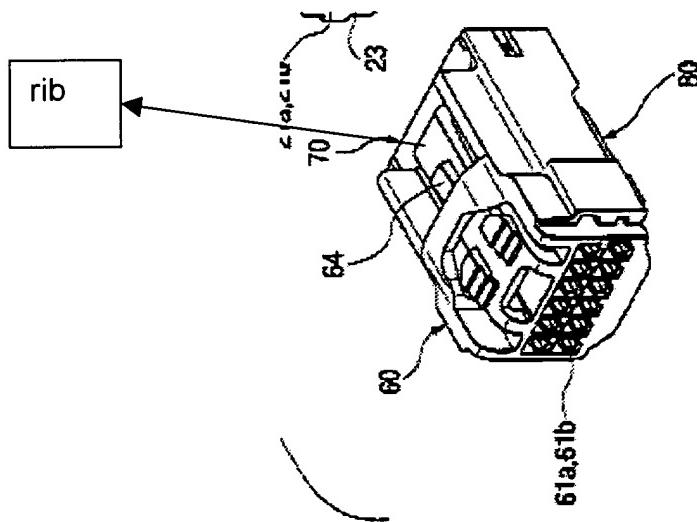
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Regarding claim 5, Suzuki discloses a mating housing (60) fittable into the receptacle.

Regarding claim 6, Suzuki, figure 1, discloses the mating housing having a rib (see figure below) slidably engageable with the guiding means in the receptacle.

Regarding claim 7, Suzuki, figure 1, a shake-preventing portion (64) is disposed on the mating housing for becoming active towards the end of an insertion stroke of the mating housing into the receptacle.

Regarding claim 8, the shake-preventing portion is provided at a rear end of the rib of the mating housing.



Regarding claims 9 and 10, Suzuki, figures 1, 6 and 16, the housing is a male housing, the tabs (44) of the male terminals (40) project into the receptacle and the front member is a moving plate formed with through holes (23) through which the tabs can be passed.

Regarding claims 11-17, are rejected as the same as claims 1 and 5-10 above.

Conclusion

5. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Thanh-Tam T. Le whose telephone number is 571-272-2094. The examiner can normally be reached on 7:30-5:00.
6. If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Lynn Feild can be reached on 571-272-2092. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.
7. Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

TL.
06/30/2004


T. Le